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# Smash & Grab: The Story of the Pink Panthers

By Unknown

This programme contains some strong language some scenes which some viewers may find upsetting

**CAR REVS:**

**TYRES SCREECH:**

**TYRES SCREECH:**

Now, they're known as the Pink Panthers. They're a gang that steals jewels from high-end stores all over the world. And one of their alleged members... Armed with this Magnum revolver and helped by an accomplice, he pounced. We are talking about an international criminal group made up of more than 200 people. They are organised in independent cells and they live in different countries. These are all people from the former Yugoslavia. The core of the group comes from Montenegro. There is another substantial group from Serbia.

**CAR HORN BEEPS:**

One of the Panthers said that every robbery that is lasting more than 22 seconds is a great risk.

**CAR HORN BEEPS AGAIN**

There's no alarm, no security system, they can be good, that cannot be broken. Two hours, you're in another country and you are safe. That's what I like, you know. I have a lot to tell you about these robberies and there were many. But the best job I've did

was in Spain.  
We waited for a festival  
that was about to take place  
and we waited a long time.  
It was some kind of  
a religious thing, fiesta -  
music, dancing.  
Some kind of noise that they couldn't  
hear us banging through the walls.  
And now the action could begin.

**PHONE DIALS:**

**PHONE RINGS:**

My name is Novak, you know,  
and people call us Pink Panthers.

**HE LAUGHS:**

And English people, they call us,  
because of the film.  
I read somewhere that one inspector,  
I don't know where,  
he said that we are terrorists  
or something like that.  
Modern terrorists,  
but it's not true.  
I mean, we are just taking something  
unimportant for rich people,  
for us - who doesn't have that,  
you know?

**HE LAUGHS:**

We started with some houses,  
you know,  
some cars and something like that.  
But jewelleries,  
we find out, is much easier.  
Jewellery's small, it's expensive,  
it gets you more money.  
We can be in China,  
we can be in Singapore, Tokyo, Dubai.  
Wherever they have rich stuff,  
we can be there.

**ALARM BLARES:**

**SEAGULLS SQUAWK:**

Here, we are really in the middle of the old town of Geneva. And there you have all the...all the biggest jewelleries with million and million of stuff in the windows. There you have Chatila... This jewellery was attacked by the Pinks in 2009. That mean they enter by this door and after that, there were, in this road, two scooter... You say scooter in English? ..were waiting and when they finished the robberies, they jump on the scooter and they leave the place. Gubelin was attacked one or two times by the Pinks. Graff - Graff Geneva... ..De Grisogono, Chopard, Adler... About the statistics or numbers, approximately we have 500 cases of robberies and burglaries made by the Pinks. Speaking about the value of all the robberies, approximately 300 millions of US dollars. If you take all their crimes together, they are the best jewellery thieves in the world. I know, but like you say, it's a Pink Panther! And there are colleagues who give me that one or two years ago. They were involved in a case we began here and they work on. And they find this big Pink Panther

and they bring it here.  
And it's a joke between  
all the teams in Europe  
working on the Pink Panthers.  
PHONE RINGS IN BACKGROUND

**PRODUCER:**

you first hear of the Pink Panthers?  
It was in 2000. At the beginning,  
it was different.  
For me, it was different  
as the other teams  
about the organisation -  
it was more organised.  
The action was very,  
very fast, when they come.

SPEECH NOT AUDIBLE

'They have made a lot of robberies,  
so that mean when they come,  
'they are confident, they are sure  
about "what I have to do".  
'The preparation is very, very good.  
'That means they come sometimes  
some months before  
'to try to find which jewellery  
they are going to attack.  
'And after that, to know exactly  
how they are going to work,  
'how many people they need to be  
in there,  
'how they are going to escape.  
'And after that, they do  
the robbery.  
'Sometimes, working on bad guys,'  
there is something very particular,  
very special, between...  
there is a respect but,  
at the same time, it is like a game.  
They know that we are hunting them.  
Because it's a little bit like that  
from Pacino and De Niro in the film.  
It was like that,  
but they are always movies.  
They are not the reality. That's...

We just must remember  
that they are bad guys  
going inside jewellery with guns.  
'We understood in this time  
that they were able to do things,  
incredible,  
'that nobody had done before.'  
The first time, we didn't know  
that they were Pink Panthers.  
You know, this name did not exist,  
at this time.  
The first time, we just think it was  
one robbery or two robberies,  
that's all.  
We did not identify, the first time,  
the importance of the group.  
It was a challenge  
cos they are  
crossing the borders very fast,  
after the robbery - very easily.  
We started to understand  
that it was a group.  
The only thing we know - that they  
were coming from former Yugoslavia.  
So that's all we had, the first time.  
And so we started to identify  
the different city they were  
coming from in former Yugoslavia -  
especially Montenegro,  
from Cetinje.  
Yugoslavia.  
Yugoslavia.  
Yugoslavia.  
Yugoslavia.  
Few Americans know little,  
if anything, about Yugoslavia.  
One reason is because not many  
people know where to find it.  
Actually, it's really quite simple -  
just go to Italy and make a right.  
Yugoslavia.  
A popular misconception  
about Yugoslavia is that  
it is a neighbouring country

of the Soviet Union. In actuality,  
it borders seven European countries,  
none of them being Russia.  
A bigger misconception than  
the location, though,  
is the country itself.  
When most Americans  
think of Yugoslavia,  
this is not what comes to mind...  
..or this...  
..or this...  
..or even this.

#### DOG BARKS IN THE DISTANCE

'The first time I heard about  
Panthers were in 2004.  
'It was a surprise.  
'And my first thought  
when newspapers published'  
that the perpetrators  
were three Serbs,  
I said, "Fuck!  
This is all we needed."  
My second thought, however, was,  
"Hmm, interesting.  
"How very skilful people."  
Because I didn't know  
how they did it.  
Well, before 2000,  
we don't have Pink Panthers.  
Some people started with  
so big and exclusive heists...  
..mostly in Europe, only Europe.  
And after it, we have some of the  
Panthers robbed out of Europe.  
They went to Bahrain.  
They went to Japan.  
They went to Dubai.  
I'm working right now for BIRN,  
Balkan Investigative Reporting  
Network.  
And, at the moment, I am looking  
for Pink Panthers, like I'm mad.  
I'm working for more than  
two years on this.

At first, I didn't believe it was possible to find any of them. Why would any say, "Look, I'm Pink Panther, I'm going to help you"? So that required a lot of work, a lot of travelling, a lot of phone calls... ..finding sources on the places you would never believe you can find them. That usually meant being on the road all the time, travelling to the region all the time, meeting all kinds of people all the time. I must talk to dozens of different people, all kinds of people, meet them, be ready to meet them at any time. You must make them trust you - that you are not going to talk to the police, that you are not going to put any of them in danger. If you know, when you do something so extraordinary which attracts the attention of the whole world and many people say, "Bravo, you robbed the bigger criminals." Well, that can light some fire inside. I believe so. OK, so if we start with... Could he just introduce himself? OK, Mike, so we've agreed that we will record this interview, but not show your face. So, we'll use your real words but we'll animate you and your voice. No face. Not my real voice. So, tell me, who are the Pink Panthers? Well, I don't have a badge that



says Pink Panther on it.  
We are a network of teams  
working together  
and as I was involved,  
I became part of the network.  
Everybody has their specific job  
to do, understand?  
So we all depend on each other.  
Those in the inner circle are called  
family.  
But you have guys who don't know who  
their bosses or associates are.  
You have to be in with them  
for a long time dealing with these  
kind of bigger jobs.  
You get tips from your own  
supervisor,  
but there is also a wider  
chain of command.  
You never know where you stand in  
the hierarchy,  
because you never meet the boss.  
You don't know this guy is the big  
boss. There's no such thing.  
No big boss.  
You need a brain, knowledge.  
And experience to do this work.  
This means the jobs that we do and  
the other gangs that do sex, drugs,  
murder, they rarely cross over.  
So, tell me,  
what is it about the diamond?  
I don't know why people spend  
money on diamonds.  
I don't suffer from this  
showing off.  
I have a Rolex, but as a souvenir.  
But diamonds, nah, they don't  
attract me.  
For me, diamonds mean good cash.  
Nothing else.  
Not anyone can do this job.  
You must be born to do it.  
You must firstly trust in yourself...

..because if you are weak,  
you can't do it.  
Women in the Panthers have to  
be...exceptional.  
Exceptional.  
I was extremely good looking.  
30kgs less.  
I had long red hair at the time.  
Although I had frequent  
transformations, very frequent.  
I would be sometimes blonde,  
sometimes brunette.  
You can only have one in each gang.  
And we have high requirements for  
the women.  
They have the leading roles.  
They have to do the main job,  
so they do the scouting,  
they enter, they record  
and they bring the plan.  
That means the woman has to be  
intelligent,  
she has to be beautiful and she has  
to love money.  
The guys do a great majority of jobs.  
But they also need a woman on their  
team.  
Everyone always thinks it's the men,  
men, men.  
But without woman nothing would be  
done.  
Lela has to be dressed in most  
expensive clothes, you know?  
Most elegant clothes, wearing  
expensive jewellery.  
Also to have her own chauffeur.  
She had to act exactly like Madonna.  
I had to look very powerful. It was  
stuff by Burberry, then Chanel.  
Whatever was in and whatever was  
popular.  
I wouldn't even know some of the  
brands that existed.  
But the stuff purchased, it was well

known that it was very expensive.

**THUNDER RUMBLES:**

**ALARM BLARES:**

So, how did it all begin?

In the beginning it was individuals.

Small shops, casinos.

We went where there was money, gold.

And eventually, jobs got bigger  
and better.

When I was in Italy, I worked with  
this guy from Kosovo.

Like his apprentice.

He could open a safe in two minutes.

We were together for four years  
and by the end, I could open a cat  
in no time.

What's the cat? The cat,  
we call a cat, the safe.

Jewellery is like a magnet  
for crime.

It's worth a lot and the crooks  
want it. Hello, I'm Mike for...

Jewellery crime is big business,  
often run by organised criminals  
who won't hesitate to use violence  
in the city, suburbs or out in the  
country.

Jewellery crime causes \$1.1 billion  
in losses each year  
from all sources, including  
consumers.

But in most stores,  
most of the jewellery does end up  
here at closing time,  
and even though it's not as common  
as you might think,  
the safe is still a target.

I have a lot to tell you about  
these robberies,  
and there were many, but the best  
job I did was in Spain.

Perfect plan.

The jewellery shop was a perfect target.

It was a beautiful boutique, you know.

Very high class.

There was, in this city, a most beautiful jewellery shop.

Everything with diamonds. Rings with diamonds, bracelets, necklaces.

Very beautiful.

Jewellery rarely achieves that kind of sparkle, very rarely,

but we had no access,

no access at all.

So we had to do it in a different way.

We tried many ways.

We had different ideas about the job and then, finally, we had the idea -

just to hire a shop next door.

Next to the jewellery shop was the souvenir shop.

In order to get to the jewellery shop,

we needed to go through this second shop first.

She met the Spanish shop owner and befriended him.

She had to lure the guy into a trap.

I didn't go to seduce him,

but my very appearance

contributed to his joy.

He employed me at his place.

Not to work, because I couldn't speak the language well enough,

but to oversee things.

She had to do a good job

because we needed to gain his trust.

Of course, her beauty helped.

He thought they could get closer,

that they would be

together every day.

Well, I don't see why I should feel guilty.

It is his problem that he  
fell in love with me  
and that my presence brought him  
lots of pleasure.  
I couldn't do anything about that.  
So when she was there, she examined  
the wall,  
which gave us an idea that we could  
knock it down  
and where we could exit...  
..which way we could run.  
She was there so she could scan  
and find that information,  
see if the plan would be possible.  
The reason why I spent a lot of time  
with the Spanish guy was so that  
I could observe exactly  
when the jewellery shop closed -  
when would it open, when they  
would go out for a coffee,  
for how long they would be out.  
Generally, it was all about them.  
In fact, I'm the most important part  
of the job, and I'm aware of that.  
My one mistake would be their fall,  
so if I make an error somewhere,  
they are doomed.  
Tell me about your life growing up  
in Yugoslavia.  
I'm from the border of Montenegro  
and Albania, actually.  
I'm 48. My father was born Muslim  
and a communist.  
Tito.  
He was our idol.

**APPLAUSE:**

Tito and the Communist Party of  
Yugoslavia declared  
the Republic of Yugoslavia in 1945.  
People now remember of that  
period like the golden age.  
He was a very authoritarian ruler.  
He liked his position.

But he also had a strong sense of what is necessary to do.

Yugoslavia...

was made by many different nations, different religions, different ethnic groups - we had more than 20 ethnic groups here, and I believe it was very hard to put them all together, and keep that country alive.

**SINGING:**

As kids, you know, I had in my class alongside Gypsy and other, Albanian, Croatian...

Germans, Jews, Muslims.

It was really amazing.

I only got my first passport

when I was 16 or 17,

but I couldn't wait for the summer.

In May, the first tourists would come.

Germans, French, Italian

and English would come too

and they would go swim naked.

I would sell them Coke and beer.

Wherever there was an opportunity to peek, to watch naked women,

I would sit down to watch.

My first love was this German woman.

I'm still thinking of her now.

That's how I actually got to learn my German.

See how it's all coming back.

As a young girl, I lived in

Dimitrovgrad.

It was a small house

where my grandmother lived.

**BELL TOLLS:**

But my aunt came for me and my life continued in Hamburg, in Germany.

GERMAN MUSIC PLAYS

I had a wonderful time, wonderful.

This is something that remains stamped in my memory.

I was taken by the extravagance and luxury there was.

I thought, "I will become something and somebody in my life."

I couldn't go out that much, as my aunt was a very strict woman. She was working in Yugoslav restaurant and she got me a job to wash dishes and to work at the bar.

I had a chance to meet all kinds of people,

and that's how I met my boyfriend.

I was still a child, 17 years old,

I was still a child, 17 years old,

and there was some kind of chemistry between us.

And after that, he started giving me all kinds of gifts,

perfumes, necklaces, bracelets,

and so we got together.

**SHE SPEAKS GERMAN**

Ladies and gentlemen, we would like to inform you about a few things that will be of interest to you during the flight.

I was in love and I was doing everything just to be with him.

It was arranged that we all go to Spain,

but this was where everything was clear to me -

this was a criminal job

that he was doing.

When he confessed, I wasn't bothered with it at all.

In fact, I asked him to introduce me to his job so I can be closer to him.

**THUNDER RUMBLES:**

I was very anxious, nervous,

I wanted to do it,

but in that moment, I thought to  
myself, "How am I going to?"  
Somewhere in the back of my mind  
I was afraid, but I never showed it.  
I would go all or nothing.  
And I became the scout, I entered the  
shop, I recorded where everything is,  
I told them.  
Lela would then simply  
enter the boutique,  
and she would register everything,  
solely with her eyes...  
..where everything is, the  
distances, how far things are,  
what she thinks can be done, to what  
extent, who is there...  
how many of them, how many cameras.  
Every single detail, she has to  
cover.  
It is only a woman who can do  
this job properly.  
A man would stick out too much.  
She can ask for a necklace,  
she can ask for a ring.  
I had a very large hat.  
I looked like a real lady.  
And I had that ring.  
That ring was very expensive.  
And I told them that I lost weight  
and that I came for them  
to make it smaller.  
While they were doing this,  
I had plenty of time to assess  
and check out everything around me.  
I couldn't see the safe,  
we call the safe the kitten,  
I couldn't locate it, but everything  
else I had to assess.  
When I would go back home, there was  
a man who would sketch it all  
based on my story.  
He drew it all.  
The woman didn't take  
part in the action.



She gave us the key,  
gave us information  
and her part of the job is finished.  
Most of the time, I felt strong,  
but I sometimes had a feeling that  
I was drowning,  
that everything is falling  
to pieces...  
..but when I would see my boyfriend  
next to me, it would lift me up.  
You have to lock yourself in a room.  
You would see other  
people from the balcony,  
a girlfriend or a boyfriend  
walking in the open,  
we were not allowed to do that.  
You would feel a kind of collapse  
somewhere in your soul.  
Sometimes nothing,  
neither money or gold or any  
kind of wealth would give me  
as much satisfaction as the mere  
thought that one day we would go away  
together and be alone,  
hope that we will live normal life,  
like everyone else.  
It took about four months  
to complete all this planning  
process...  
..and it cost a lot of money.  
After all that, I had to disappear  
because that was the arrangement  
between us.  
I would have beauticians coming  
to my house, hairdressers,  
not even he can recognise me  
sometimes,  
but he would tell me  
that I have to  
do frequent makeovers  
because of myself and because of the  
false documents.  
That sounds fun and quite glamorous,  
the transformations.

Did you enjoy it? No, I hated it.  
They weren't fun to do  
because I liked the way I looked,  
and sometimes those transformations  
would bother me,  
like I lost my identity.  
I felt like a doll  
that was experimented on.  
Tito died in 1980.  
It was like my father died,  
just like my father.  
I can't explain the mourning.  
They took us to visit his  
mausoleum - Kuca Cveca, it's called.  
You would have to queue  
for two days  
to visit his tomb  
and pay your tribute -  
the entire Yugoslavia was there.  
This is when it all started.  
You could sense the separation  
coming from the point  
that each republic would  
have their own president.  
MILOSEVIC SPEAKS TO CROWD  
The first time  
I saw Milosevic was on television.  
I saw him  
during this big rally in Kosovo.  
The separation  
and hatred already started by then.  
In every city, there was  
a national ID.  
You're a Serbian, Albanian,  
this guy's from Croatia,  
you know, from Kosovo.  
I don't know, great tension -  
everything was cracking open.  
For me, as an Albanian  
in Montenegro,  
the hatred was very visible,  
just pure hatred.  
This is where the huge  
partition started.

CROWD CHAN After Tito died,  
separatist groups in different  
nations of Yugoslavia  
just rose up...  
..and they really contributed to the  
final end of that country...  
..to its dismantling.  
I think that you'll have to agree  
that Yugoslavia is a pretty  
spectacular country, and we haven't  
even seen half of it yet.  
Tomorrow night,  
Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia,  
Sarajevo,  
the site of the 1984 Winter Olympics  
and then, Dubrovnik,  
one of the most exciting,  
unique and charming little  
cities in all of the world.  
I saw it last night  
and I can't wait for you to see it,  
so I'll see you tomorrow  
night from Yugoslavia.  
TRADITIONAL MUSIC PLAYS

**EXPLOSION:**

**GUNFIRE:**

**REPORTER:**

communities of Muslims, Serbs  
'and Croats have traditionally lived  
together in peace...  
'..until a majority of the people  
in Bosnia-Herzegovina  
'voted for independence,  
'denying Serbia its plans  
for a newly-formed Yugoslavia.'  
All the darkness of Milosevic's  
regime  
left a huge mark on people's soul.  
Many people just like...  
..to the war zones,  
you know, sent to Dubrovnik

or Bosnia to kill, to rape.  
I like this area, I really do.  
It's so green.  
This is the street where  
I spent many hours during the '90s,  
because I was demonstrating against  
Slobodan Milosevic and his rule.  
It has very strong  
and very fresh memories.  
I mean, just...  
We tried to say,  
"Look, it's time for you to go."  
"You are taking us  
into total disaster."  
It is just interesting to pass here  
after so many years.  
Nice treat.

**REPORTER:**

the pressure on Yugoslavia,  
'the European community  
decided today.  
'Behind closed doors,  
'they imposed immediate trade  
sanctions against Yugoslavia,  
'and the UN Security Council  
is to be asked  
'to coordinate an oil embargo.'  
What we've decided today  
is to impose  
sanctions on the whole of Yugoslavia.  
Over time, that will certainly  
build into an effective pressure.  
I don't know how long.

**MIKE:**

it was the core of Milosevic' regime  
and activities.  
You know, times were such  
that you don't know  
what tomorrow's going to bring.  
We all took this rhythm of,  
"Come on, come on,"  
smuggling everywhere,

crime everywhere,  
nobody thought about real jobs.  
I mean, there's no real job.  
I had a good deal of money.  
When there was a job, cracking safe,  
I would go abroad for a month  
or two.  
It was a good job, profitable, you  
know, we were dancing to the music.  
It was the time of turbo-folk music.  
Every time I hear it, I feel chaos.  
SHE SINGS IN OWN LANGUAGE  
Everybody was trying to swindle you,  
rob you, cheat,  
it was bare survival -  
just deceit after deceit.  
There was not a single night that  
somebody wasn't beaten up or killed.  
The black market has flourished  
under the sanctions.  
There is a widespread network  
of illegal dealings in all spheres  
and it is done with the quiet  
consent of Serbian government.

**MILENA:**

erupted during the wars,  
which is usual and expected.  
Many people became criminals,  
but not all.  
We all had choice.  
It wasn't easy, it was difficult.  
I could become prostitute or  
drug smuggler or oil smuggler,  
but I've not.

**THUNDER RUMBLES:**

**REPORTER:**

'Hundreds were kicked out of Kosovo  
today, literally -  
'kicked and beaten at the border  
'within sight of freedom.  
'And so, the biggest forced

exodus in Europe goes on  
'with enough bitterness to ensure  
'that Albanians and Serbs will find  
it hard ever to live together again.'  
Europe couldn't do much, you know,  
it was getting too big -  
refugees from Bosnia,  
from Kosovo, from Croatia...  
..and 70% of these refugees  
went to Europe,  
and so the criminal went to Europe,  
and this is the beginning  
of Pink Panther.

**MILENA:**

in 2000 -  
a few people started to rob  
really, really big values.  
OK, they are using guns.  
This is to scare.  
That is the only purpose of gun,  
but one of their condition  
is no victims.  
They were actually creating  
the signature  
of what we know now as  
Pink Panthers.  
And as one Panther said,  
"After that, you have ten years  
of very good life."

**MIKE:**

that was about to take place,  
and we waited a long time.  
It was some kind of a religious  
thing,  
a fiesta, music, dancing,  
just some kind of noise.  
That was what we were waiting for -  
some kind of noise that they  
couldn't hear us  
banging through the walls.  
Because the crooks need time,  
they're more likely to hit

safes on weekends or holidays.  
They're clever about finding ways to  
do it without attracting attention.  
There was four of us plus one guy in  
a van.

We were completely  
hidden by the people in the street.

#### FIREWORKS AND STREET CHATTER

We were all dressed up,  
we had our masks, bodysuits,  
completely covered up -  
you couldn't see us at all,  
and now the action could begin.

#### **RUBBLE BREAKS:**

We only needed to pickaxe the wall.  
In the end, there was a hole this big  
and we squeezed through it  
into the boutique behind.

We knew everything that was in a  
glass case was alarmed. It's a trick.  
They always do this.

They alarm cheap stuff like a decoy.  
But the real booty is in the safe!  
So we got to the safe, we try to take  
it out with the pickaxe...

But we couldn't. We were looking  
at it and there was no chance.  
Then we saw the screws were inside  
the concrete  
and we had the idea to lift it up  
with the car jack.

Lucky there was one in the van.  
We got out, we took the safe out  
of the shop and we put it in the van.

People around us,  
fiesta, fireworks - incredible.

Thing is, there's no panic  
when you do the job.

The panic begins when you run.

But we drove away through  
the people.

And we went away into the woods.

We got out by a lake,

I remember.  
Somewhere dark, somewhere safe.  
Somewhere secure.  
And then we began to open the safe.  
You get the safes  
that are mechanical, numerical,  
with locks, and you get the digital  
ones. I can crack them all.  
Digital safes are the easiest  
to open.  
You take some powder and dust them  
and you can see the fingerprints  
and you know everything.  
Numerical ones are the hardest.  
You have to use your hearing,  
you have to have very good hearing  
and a good memory.  
This is very difficult.  
But in this case we couldn't open it.  
We tried everything.  
We made phone calls.  
I spoke to another safe expert.  
But we gave up that night.  
You can't sleep.  
You can't sleep, for God's sake.  
We're all in this together,  
we're all friends  
but with this kind of loot, your  
brain works on different frequency.  
You could have two or three million  
euros  
and you don't know what will happen.  
I don't know. Money is money,  
you can't separate.  
If one of us is missing,  
he could take it all.

**WOMAN:**

I was already worrying  
why they were not back yet.  
They didn't call,  
no phone calls at all  
because that was the arrangement.  
I didn't know what was happening,



all kinds of thoughts were going  
through my head.

I would often cry  
and I wanted to get out of the flat  
but I was told not to do that.

Sometimes I wouldn't even  
care about the money.

I waited for HIM, not the loot.

We had to wait for the morning to  
buy additional tools that we needed.

We bought two more crowbars, one big,  
one small, we took another  
pickaxe and we thought we could do  
something with burning gas.

And when we had the tools,  
we went back to the lake.

We were guarding the van outside  
and inside we could speak  
and pick until finished.

#### **THUNDER CRACKS:**

It took over an hour  
to open the safe.

When you open a safe  
and you see it's a full, full safe...

There's the feeling, it's like,  
a feeling you might faint any moment.

I love that!

And in this safe there was plenty  
of stuff. There was really a lot.

We found six bags  
that we call rolls.

It was three stones,  
three bags of stones, two with  
bracelets

and one with watches. Er...

In the newspapers,  
when it came about the robbery,  
it said the value three million.

And if I can only say what else  
we found, inside of the safe!

We found a fake penis!

You say dildo, no?

And I bet you they didn't declare

that to the police!

**HE LAUGHS:**

What do they do with the jewels?  
We don't know exactly.  
What we know, the jewels are going  
very fast out of the country  
to where they committed the robbery.  
The day after,  
the jewels are disappeared.  
We think they are going in Italy  
or in Montenegro or Serbia  
and after, it is sold.  
So, what do you do  
with the diamonds?  
We bring the stones over here  
to our contact in Belgrade  
but he doesn't have a market  
in the former Yugoslavia.  
He has to sell abroad  
but maybe, I don't know, Antwerp?  
We would do this job ourselves  
but it's very risky abroad  
because you make an offer,  
you give it to the guy,  
they take it and it's a set-up  
and bang. You're killed.  
No, we stay in the Balkans.

**TRANSLATION:**

What do you do, then,  
do you hide it, do you swallow it?

**HE LAUGHS:**

They had a false passport and  
they were about to cross the border  
very easily, by plane, by car,  
or by train and for them  
it was difficult to follow them and  
to know what they are going to do.  
When they go back to the country,  
there was like a protection,  
they knew nobody is going to come  
to Montenegro or to Serbia to

pick them there,  
even if you have an arrest warrant,  
because some of them  
were involved with the politicians  
and so it was very difficult,  
so they knew that as soon as  
I have made my robbery,  
I go back to the country -  
there I'm protected.  
That's right, in the Balkans  
they speak of the pinks  
like Robin Hood.  
But that's not reality.  
Normally, about the guys we know,  
the money they use or they have  
they're not going to give that  
for the Red Cross or...  
an association in Montenegro.  
You have some who will reinvest  
some money in drugs,  
some who put the money in real estate  
and some just use the money  
for fun.  
Then the pink starts changing.  
He starts gambling, going out  
all the time, the money that we had,  
we start to rapidly spend it more  
and more.  
And then we start arguing.  
I wanted to somehow attract him  
to live a different kind of life.  
I thought perhaps he needs only one  
more job and he would change.  
It would change his life.  
But I saw that he wouldn't  
change for anything or anybody.  
He said he wanted me to continue  
my life and that he didn't know  
if his life would ever change.  
Then I gave up on him.  
MILITARY MARCHING CHAN My name is Green  
and I'm from Bosnia-Herzegovina.  
I don't consider myself as one  
of Pink Panthers but I am connected.

In 1996,  
I joined the special operation unit  
because I knew that the contacts  
in the Serbian security service  
would allow me  
job benefits in the future.  
My first criminal job in Bosnia  
was importing stolen cars  
from Europe.  
The second job was human  
trafficking for prostitution,  
predominantly  
from Ukraine and Moldova.  
So, it is only the third phase that  
we do drugs, cocaine and diamonds.  
Nothing in diamonds could be done  
outside the Serb secret service.  
America asked the United Nations  
to prevent diamond smuggling  
because this war in Sierra Leone  
was financed by diamond trade.  
The Americans requested every diamond  
sold in Sierra Leone  
had to have a certificate  
about its origin and everything,  
so we actually, my group and myself,  
learned how to make certificates and  
how to make clean illegal diamonds  
that are ready for the market.  
The first contract with  
Pink Panthers was when I started  
the diamond business in Antwerp.  
They would bring diamonds to me  
and my team would process it,  
forging diamond certificates  
and inputting real information  
from Sierra Leone that was  
mined in this and that place  
and it has original certificates.  
The entire genesis, America asked  
the United Nations to establish.  
The diamonds are cut, reshaped,  
but they get smaller.  
If it was 30 carats, it is now 15.

They are clean in every sense of the word.  
It's not possible to prove they are not clean.  
Our biggest clients are Americans.  
I will say, although I've never been to America, my diamonds are on the hands of the brides.  
I receive information, Al-Qaeda also purchase diamonds.  
Diamonds have a good exchange value because they don't leave electronic trace.  
Every transaction over 15,000 euros or dollars is controlled.  
But who controls diamonds? Nobody.  
You can come out with a tiny bag full of diamonds and you can buy a bowl filled with cocaine.  
The real...  
the first step on the real work on the Pink Panthers is 2007, when Monaco pushed Interpol to make a project work...  
to create this Project Pink Panther.  
And the real job, for me, began at this time.  
Because at this time, we began to say, "OK, they are linked, "they are reselling.  
"A lot of these teams are linked and working in all Europe.  
"And we have to do this project "so we can put all the information together."  
If we take one example, this guy, we see that he is connected to this guy because they were arrested together, in 2004.  
And at the same time, he is connected with this guy

because they have done  
a robbery together.  
Because we know that there are,  
between some groups,  
like, a small competition -  
who is going to make  
the biggest robbery.  
And we know that there are  
some targets in the world  
and the first one who is going  
to make that will take...  
a little bit, like,  
take the lead on the other teams.  
Well, the night of the incident,  
it was just a regular night out,  
hanging out with some friends.  
And I get a call  
from a friend of mine  
who informs me that there's  
a big robbery going on at Wafi.  
She tells me that  
her husband's there  
and he's just sent her,  
on BlackBerry,  
a video shot of what's happening.  
CONFUSED SHOUTING  
I immediately headed out to Wafi  
and I just saw police  
cordoning off the area around it.  
CONFUSED SHOUTING  
I was standing at the entrance  
and started clipping pictures  
and trying to see what's going on  
and what's happened.  
Out comes the door -  
the Dubai police chief.  
The first words that have come  
out of his mouth that night was,  
"These were definitely not Arabs."  
"This was too well-organised."  
CONFUSED SHOUTING  
So what happened?  
You went straight to the mall?  
Yes, I went straight and I meet

my commanders, also, in the area.  
And we closed the places  
and we find some glass  
is on the ground  
and the evidence from  
all the things.  
And we must be careful about the  
place and that's what we're doing.  
The cars have come out of  
this main doorway,  
that's right behind us,  
drove straight through  
onto this road  
which connects them  
to the outside of the mall  
and into the highway,  
where we're going to retrace  
the route that they've taken,  
right now.  
From this point onwards,  
to the highway,  
there are no traffic lights.  
So the guys had more or less  
clear access to the roads.  
So the thieves dumped the cars,  
set fire to them,  
jumped into their getaway car  
and now they have disappeared.  
The whole thing would have possibly  
taken them about ten minutes.  
Next day morning, early morning,  
the two cars were found abandoned  
and burnt.  
One of them more than the other.

**MAJOR GENERAL:**

all the window of the cars.  
When he closed the window, there  
is no oxygen for the fire inside  
and then we find all  
the evidence inside this car.  
We find the gloves,  
we find some dress,  
we find the tanks who have used

the chemicals to burn the cars.  
Immediately, we know this  
is organised  
from Pink Panther organised crimes.  
This is what I feel immediately,  
when I go back to see the CCTV  
camera.

**TRANSLATION:**

At that time, every single Serbian  
who has had a record  
was picked up and questioned.

**TRANSLATION:**

So how many people did you have  
working on the job? Anything.  
We don't get a limit for that.  
It depended about  
what the kind of work  
they will be doing is.  
Over the next three, four days,  
it just went frantic.  
They kept on feeding  
information to the Interpol,  
for the international police force  
to try to get these guys.

**TRANSLATION:**

It's not easy for anyone  
to do any crime  
and not leave any evidence.  
They left evidence, that helped us.  
Because this is forensics  
and that's the beauty of DNA.  
We got information from Interpol  
about the DNA.  
So we were working.  
And we knew that they rented a car.  
But this car,  
nobody knows where this car is.  
Then we found the car.  
We decide that we will not  
take the car.  
We will watch it.



And we find one guy -  
they try to open the car  
and we catch him,  
because that guy,  
they sent to take the jewels  
out of the country.  
We find the jewellery  
inside this car.  
Police, when the arrests were made,  
called in a huge press conference.  
All the media was there,  
laid out the jewellery  
in front of everybody and said,  
"We've caught them,  
we've nabbed them.  
"We're done."  
And who were the others, then?  
You had a picture of the girl.  
Yes.  
But she's not in prison? No.  
She's in Serbia, so maybe  
she cannot be arrested in Serbia.  
I hope she'll be arrested in Serbia.  
But I know her.  
We tried to discuss this  
with Interpol.  
We tried to do so.  
So if a member of the Pink Panther  
gang watches my film,  
what is your message?  
To be far from our area.  
Don't try to play with us,  
because we are not playing.  
They had a great period  
between 2000 and 2006.  
And the problem for them,  
it is that the connection  
between the different police  
in Europe is a problem for them.  
We can exchange information  
very easily.  
And on top of that,  
with Serbia and Montenegro now,  
we have a good connection

and they are cooperating  
with the Western police in Europe.  
So for them, it's going to be harder  
to commit these robberies in Europe.  
And that's what Interpol said -  
it's one of the first time  
they have such a project  
which gives so much information  
and who bring us  
to so many arrests.  
Since 2007,  
you have nearly 50 people  
who were arrested across Europe.  
Is it still safe here?  
Oh, no, no, no.  
Montenegro isn't a safe haven  
any more.  
Montenegro has started  
to extradite people  
because they want to join  
the European Union.  
So it's not any more  
about doing it and escaping.  
You have to protect yourself here  
as much as there.  
But, you know,  
now we lead much more simple lives.  
Things slowed down and, you know...  
Now it's becoming more difficult  
and more dangerous,  
because the police know  
all the tricks.  
It would be very nice  
to feel secure,  
to be in your home - safe.  
And this is the consequence  
of this job - paranoia.  
You see, now I walk down the street  
and my head goes like...  
Like a rear view mirror, you know?  
Am I being followed?  
Does anybody see me?  
Anybody follow me?  
The habit lingers.

Even now, in my pocket,  
I have pills - had pills -  
just in case.  
But crisis throws you back in it.  
You are used to a lot of money,  
lots of fun.  
You have a reputation -  
easy money spent, easy money earned.  
It burns quickly,  
so when you're left with no money,  
you don't know how to do  
another job.

**INTERCOM BUZZES:**

We have always old teams who work,  
who try to make new teams,  
and at the same time,  
we have brand-new teams.  
We have a lot of guys  
working in all Europe.  
For me, they're more violent.  
Already, their entrance  
in the jeweller's  
is not so professional  
and there could be mistakes inside,  
and that could be  
more dangerous for us,  
because the attitude of the bad guys  
could bring us to a tragic end.  
Look, I must warn you something -  
you cannot say  
the Pink Panthers' era is over,  
because you don't know  
what will happen next.  
It is maybe just the end  
of one generation.  
But what is going on with  
the other teams from other countries  
that want to do the same?  
Maybe we are just witnessing  
the development.  
I went back to Dimitrovgrad.  
Bad. Very bad.  
I was physically

and mentally shaken,  
and after all that luxury,  
I was completely broken down.  
I was depressed.  
But I realised that I have  
to carry on with my life.  
I got married to a man  
who gave me hope.  
He was completely legal.  
He wasn't corrupt,  
he wasn't criminal.  
But I finally started  
a new life with him.  
I started a family.

**BABY GURGLES:**

In my heart, I remain what I was.  
Milan is the man I love.  
But when kids come,  
you can't choose.  
You have one path.  
You cannot continue  
on criminal path.  
My mother was very pious  
and with her,  
I would sometimes pray to God  
before bedtime.  
But also in those moments  
of hardship,  
I would often go to church  
to light a candle,  
to cry and to think about things.  
And do you still believe in God?  
Yes, yes, of course.  
And I teach my children. Of course.  
We have to ask for His forgiveness.  
And all these people  
who are criminals, believe me,  
they believe in God  
more than regular people.  
We have to pray a lot more  
for His forgiveness.  
God is merciful.  
And maybe He will.